

Seattle Organics Processing RFP – Proposer Question & Answers Set #1

*The City of Seattle received these questions in response to the March 2nd Pre-Release Draft RFP. The responses below do not include vendor recommendations for revisions to the RFP. Please see the **Revisions Memo** for a summary of those recommendations and related RFP changes.*

1. Is the 5%-10% “wet” component described in the RFP intended for anaerobic digestion?

The 5-10% component of mostly “wet” yard/food waste, from a few apartment and business routes, could be good feed stock for anaerobic digestion. However, the City is not specifying or favoring any particular technology. Proposals with anaerobic digestion technology will be reviewed against the RFP evaluation criteria as will other proposed technologies.

2. Will the City transfer stations be available as backup receiving facilities?

The use of the City transfer stations as backup receiving (not processing) facilities may be considered during final negotiations with associated financial terms.

3. Can the testing of compostable packaging products be at the request of the City, rather than at the request of the manufacturers or distributors? Can the processor set standards for testing and charge the third party testing fees? What are the specifics of a City approval process?

The city is open to an arrangement where the City is coordinating the requests for packaging product testing. The processor can set appropriate and transparent testing standards and establish reasonable testing fees. The City’s approval process will be based on testing and approval by contracted processor.

4. What is the annual tonnage of compostable bags and service ware?

The City will be sampling and sorting from the City-collected organics stream over four sampling periods in 2012. The City will provide initial results from the February sampling data in the April 16th City responses to Proposer questions.

5. How will citizens, collectors and composters be able to tell the difference between compostable and non-compostable single use service ware?

The City expects to implement and promote a City logo program for service ware approved for acceptance in the City’s contracted collection services and potentially incorporating other compostable food service products that are otherwise clearly and unmistakably marked.

6. How will the City evaluate if a composting system adequately converts compostable packaging to biomass and water?

The City will review proposed technologies and operations for ability to successfully process compostable packaging. Successful proposals will clearly address how the composting process and testing program will ensure complete breakdown for packaging.

7. Will the City implement a sorting system to remove non-compostable packaging before it gets to the processor and will the City be responsible for the effectiveness of this system for limiting contamination?

No, the base specifications do not include screening technology at City transfer sites. The City will continue to conduct outreach to take-out restaurants and City customers on packaging acceptable in the City's contracted collection services. There is potential for floor inspection of organics tipped at the new city stations.

8. Would the City be committed to reducing the level of contamination over the life of the contract?

The base specifications do not include specific language related to reductions in contamination. The Final RFP does tie City contamination disposal to current and future organics waste sorts. The Final RFP also allows for the rejection of heavily contaminated loads or partial loads from City route trucks at in town transfer sites. The City's collection contractors will be expected to continue to monitor and reject organic containers at the curb that have significant amounts of non-compostable material. Customer outreach efforts, focused on reducing contamination, will continue over the life of this contract.

9. Can the disposal of contaminants be at a non-City facility?

No, the base specifications direct the disposal of City contaminants to City disposal facilities. However, equivalent arrangements could be negotiated in the final contract.

10. Will the City provide transportation of contamination from both the receiving and processing facilities?

City transportation of contaminants is from the receiving facility which can either be the processor or a reload facility.

11. Will the successful bidder be able to negotiate contract terms?

Yes, the City and successful proposer(s) will negotiate final contract terms.

12. What boundaries does the City intend to establish for estimating greenhouse gas impacts from combined City and proposer transportation operations? Will emissions from the collection fleet be incorporated? Will impacts from rail hauling versus truck hauling be included?

Yes, for the greenhouse gas review of transportation scenarios, the City will incorporate marginal impacts from changes to City contracted collection routes and the marginal impacts for rail hauling versus truck hauling.

13. Will the City be completing GHG calculations as part of its evaluation process or does the City want proposers to include relevant calculations?

The proposer should include relevant calculations in their description of strategies to minimize greenhouse gases for the transport and processing elements of their proposed facilities and operations. The City will confirm these responses against current industry standards for relevant greenhouse gas impacts.

14. How does the City intend to evaluate for the RFP Priorities such as ‘reliability’ and ‘future competitiveness’? Does the priority of ‘minimal residuals’ tie to the evaluation criteria?

The RFP Priorities are the general goals for the outcome of the RFP process. The evaluation categories and sub topics support these goals. The reliable services priority is supported by evaluation of the proposed technologies and controls and evaluation of documented experience. The future competition priority is supported by evaluation of the proposed technologies and controls. The minimal residuals priority is supported by evaluation of relevant responses under the processing technologies and controls category.

15. Is using composted material as a vegetative enhancement product on intermediate landfill slopes acceptable to the City?

No intermediate landfill use of final product will be allowed under the base specifications.

16. What value is being placed on end products being returned to the Seattle market?

There is no additional value for end products being returned to the Seattle market as part of the processing technology and controls evaluation category. However, under the sustainability evaluation category, proposers could be rewarded for proposed outreach partnerships that return product to Seattle customers.

17. Will the City be working with collection contractors to assess any increased or decreased costs for alternative transfer?

In the City’s collection contracts, there is no additional compensation to waste collectors if directed by the City to alternate transfer sites within the Duwamish Industrial Area. For

transfer sites outside the Duwamish Industrial Area, the City would compensate the collectors \$1 per ton mile based on the one-way increased distance from the current transfer site to the proposed transfer site.

18. What are the cost assumptions for city transfer and transport? What are the round trip transportation times to the current processor?

The City will provide additional information on internal costs for relevant City services with the April 16 response to Proposer questions.

19. Will the City reopen the contract if it exceeds 100,000 tons and the bidder has the 90-100% share?

No. In the base specifications, there are no minimum or maximum tons to be delivered to the processor. For a single processing contract, the City would commit to sending all collected organic waste to the contractor. If multiple contracts are awarded, then the City would commit to directing maximum and minimum percentage of the collected organic material.

20. Can the City provide the current City labor agreement for truck drivers?

The current City agreement with Washington State Council of County and City Employees, Local 21 is posted on the City Personnel website at www.seattle.gov/personnel/resources/pubs/L21.pdf

21. Do prevailing wages apply to processing and long-haul activities?

No. However, under the workforce evaluation category, the City will review Proposers' compensation packages for relevant positions.